

Diocese of Richmond Prisons & Jails

The Office of Social Ministries invites you to respond to the Gospel call: "Love one another as I have loved you." There are over 150 jails & prisons within the footprint of the DOR. Volunteers in these facilities serve as companions to offenders, victims, & affected communities. Incarcerated youth, women & men will come back into our communities upon their release, & their preparation for release begins while they are still incarcerated. Prison Ministry volunteers can help them to learn how to live as peaceful & productive members of society again, & provide invaluable, loving & committed presence in increasingly multicultural & interfaith settings. Together, we discover the greater depths of God & are lovingly transformed in the process. We invite you to join us in this life-giving ministry. You can begin by praying for those who are suffering incarceration, their families & the victims of crime.



Did you know that...

- The U.S. has 4.2% of the world's population, but 20% of the world's inmates.
- Virginia ranks 9th highest in the U.S. adult incarceration rate.
- African-Americans make up 20% of Virginia's overall population and represent about 53% of people suffering incarceration.
- About 3,000 juveniles reside in VA's Juvenile Detention Centers.
- 13,704 children in VA have a parent who is incarcerated
- 16,990 children in VA have a parent on correctional supervision.
- 103,000 children in VA who will experience a parents incarceration before the age of 18.

If you are interested in any of the volunteer opportunities listed here, contact your parish's justice & peace minister or

Office of Social Ministry

osm@richmonddiocese.org
804-359-5661



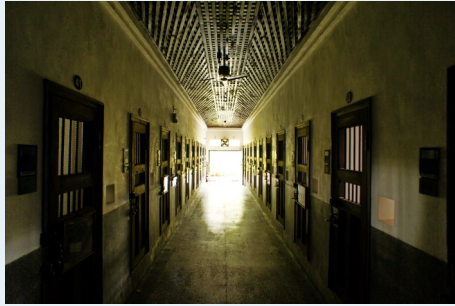
Diocese of Richmond Prison Ministry Commission



Addressing one of Virginia Area's Most Serious Gospel Challenges

"Lord... when did we visit you, when you were ill or in prison?"

- Matthew 25:39



About the Prison Ministry Commission

Richmond parishes have been involved in prison and jail ministry for decades, with individuals visiting male and female inmates in facilities near their parishes.

The Diocese of Richmond Prison Ministry Commission was formed in December, 2016. The Commission seeks to (1) recruit volunteers for prison/jail visitation and (2) assist inmates as they reenter our area communities.

The Commission has the following goals:

- ◆ Visit, mentor and coach those suffering incarceration to prepare them for life outside of prison.
- ◆ Organize housing, jobs, transportation, and addiction treatment for those reentering our communities.
- ◆ Promote public policies that enhance the rehabilitation of those who are incarcerated & reentering our communities.

Volunteer Opportunities

Inside The Walls

Visitors provide many critical services to those who are incarcerated, including:

- Regular support & hope to those who often have given up hope.
- Faith sharing in groups or one-to-one.
- Scripture study, prayer, or meditation.
- Preparation to celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, & Confirmation.
- Celebration of the Eucharist & Sacrament of Reconciliation by local priests.
- Provide religious resources approved by the local warden or chaplain (ie. Bibles, magazines, newspapers, etc.).
- Coaching, teaching or mentoring.
- Assistance in pre-release planning for reentry into society.
- Provide approved toiletries.

Outside The Walls

General Support

Prayer, writing letters, advocacy, support local reentry programs, collect magazines, toiletries, etc., provide meals for relatives of those incarcerated who have traveled to visit them.

Housing

Those reentering our communities face tremendous discrimination when seeking adequate housing. Contacts are needed to help locate potential properties that would be open to rental & occupancy by those who have been incarcerated.

Outside The Walls Continued...

Employment

Employment opportunities are essential, yet hard-to-come-by for those reentering society. Volunteers can recruit individuals & businesses willing to hire & help those reentering to achieve financial stability & self sufficiency.

(Programs for “coaches” & “mentors” are not currently in place, but are goals of the Commission.)

Coaches

Coaches work with those reentering after release, on a short-term basis to provide specific services or skills, such as: GED courses, job interview preparation, budgeting, communication skills, anger management, family dynamics, addiction issues, technology.

Mentors

Mentors are individuals, couples, or teams who commit to a longer timeframe, usually for one year, several months before the offender’s release and up to one year after release.

They provide many of the following needs:

- Encouragement, support, advice, friendship & guidance.
- Clarification of goals & life strategies.
- Occasional transportation for DMV & other essential registrations or applications.
- Resources for personal, spiritual, & psychological growth.
- Resources for help in education, employment, housing or family dynamics.

(General volunteers, mentors, or coaches are NEVER expected to provide financial assistance